



The CAPITOL HILL MONITOR

APRIL 1994

UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

We first featured a profile of the US Capitol Police in the February 1992 issue. Since then, several significant changes have taken place. For starters, the USCP radio shop has been dismantled -- the Sergeant at Arms now has assumed responsibility for radio maintenance.

The channel configurations for Capitol Police radios now vary depending upon the radio and to whom the radio is assigned. With the exception of the USCP Motorola MX (which only has channels 1 to 6) the first eight channels in all portable radios used by the department are programmed as indicated below. No Motorola radio used by the department has channels beyond channel 8. Routine radio operations are conducted primarily on channels 1 and 2. During special events additional channels are employed as required and are typically announced on channels 1 and 2 as they are activated. A CTCSS of 127.3 Hz is employed channels 1 to 8.

164.8000 r F1
164.6250 r F2
164.8000 s F3
164.6250 s F4
164.6000 r F5
164.6000 s F6
162.2500 r F7
162.2500 s F8



The bulk of Capitol Police radio communication is conducted on the eight channels listed above. Several specialized units of the department, however, have channels beyond channel 8 for tactical communication.

The First Responder Unit (FRU), whose officers provide a high degree of security and protection to the exterior of the Capitol building, have two additional channels, listed below, designated for their exclusive use. Besides manning the barricades at the north and south entrances of the plaza, FRU officers respond to the area of any disturbance inside or outside the Capitol. While the frequency for channels 9 and 10 is the same, a different digital coded squelch (DCS) tone is employed on each channel.

170.1750 s F9: South Barricade
170.1750 s F10: North Barricade

The Firearms Training Section has the following additional channels. Three different DCS codes are employed to allow for separate channels.

169.2250 r F9
169.2250 s F10
162.2500 r F11 (Bethesda site)
162.2500 r F12 (BWI site)
170.1750 s F13 (Gun Range)
170.1750 s F14 (Gun Range)

The department's Criminal Investigations Division, Dignitary Protection Division and Technical Security Division have the additional channels noted below. Dignitary Protection Division radios, however, stop at channel 14. Frequencies assigned to the Dignitary Protection Division are available nationwide. A combination of CTCSS/DCS tones are used to separate channels with redundant frequencies.

Detectives assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division (CID), which includes the Drug Enforcement, Office Thefts and General Assignments sections, conduct inquiries into all criminal acts committed within the Capitol complex.

162.2500 r F9 (Bethesda site)
162.2500 r F10 (BWI site)
163.1000 s F11
168.3500 s F12
168.3500 r F13
165.5375 s F14
169.2250 r F15
169.2250 s F16

The frequency pair 163.10/168.35 are a "government common" set and have a large number of users, with various CTCSS/DCS tones.

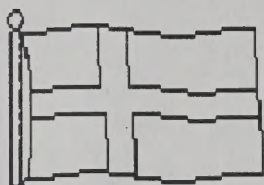
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Living in the nation's capital we often lose touch with what monitoring opportunities are available elsewhere in

the country, not to mention Europe! This month one of our monitoring colleagues from Finland takes us for a tour of the Scandinavia scanner scene. Thanks Miika!

MONITORING IN FINLAND

by Miika Keipi



Having enjoyed the friendliness of the Capitol Hill Monitors during my several "crash-ins" to the club's excursions, I promised to write something about monitoring in my home country.

People in Finland are curious, even more curious than folks in the states according to my observations. The police is the most monitored radio service in Finland, as it most probably is anywhere in the world. Before the law was changed, it was absolutely illegal to listen to radio transmissions other than broadcast stations and amateur radio communications. Still, even today it is unlawful to use your scanner in the car.

Monitoring in your home environment is all right, but the law clearly forbids monitoring the "telenetwork" which includes the cellular mobile phone systems, older car phone systems, telephone landlines and their links, modern cordless city-phones (CT1 and CT2), regular cordless phones, etc. It is also illegal to use and possess a device used for descrambling radio transmissions specifically encrypted (usually used by the authorities).

So what do we have left? Basically the same scanning opportunities as our fellow monitors in the United States and it is our own stupidity if we get caught violating the laws! Finland is located in Scandinavia and is part of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Region 1. The Americas are in Region 2. The ITU determines the use of the frequency spectrum in general and that use varies from one region to another. This can be clearly seen with the amateur radio band allocations on VHF, UHF and SHF.

Also, a telecommunications body in Europe, known as the CEPT, has been formed by the European Postal and Telecommunications Authorities. CEPT gives recommendations, which are usually followed, on type-approving requirements on different radios, systems and networks. CEPT agreements on reciprocity makes the life of a traveling ham radio and CB radio operator easy, at least if they want to use their equipment in another CEPT country.

Now, to the radio bands. Citizens Band is allocated the same 40 frequencies as in the United States, but the modes are AM and FM. In the future, after 2004, AM mode will be banned and only FM transmissions shall roam the

airwaves on the 11-meter CB band. Above the CB band there is some paging and ISM (industrial, scientific and medical) activity and of course the CB out-banders on the SSB mode.

The 10-meter band is the same for ham (amateur) radio operators worldwide: 28 to 29.7 MHz. I monitor the upper portion of the band which is for FM operations. 29.6 MHz is the simplex calling frequency and the repeaters operate between 29.62 and 29.69 MHz. When the Sun was active a few years ago it was quite common to hear several stations from North America and even from Japan and Australia!

Our first land mobile band is the next on the row, covering 29.7 to 47 MHz. It used to be active with police, fire, highway maintenance, power companies and so on. Due to interference from transmissions coming from abroad (long-distance propagation), the band was pretty much abandoned. Most users moved to higher frequencies but some activity still exists, including: the military, paging, cordless microphones, cordless hearing aids, remotely controlled devices, etc.

You can hear many transmissions from central Europe and some Arabic countries during the summer months when the sporadic E-skip conditions prevail. The winter months are a good time to scan the band for any American activity because the F2-layer will reflect signals from there (and to there) if the Sun is active enough. If the MUF (maximum usable frequency) creeps above the 10-meter ham band, I can monitor fire departments transmitting from the United States around 33 MHz!

The 47 to 68 MHz band is for TV channels 2, 2A, 3 and 4 in most parts of Europe. Channel 1 was discarded because of interference problems. This band is called the TV VHF I band (Roman numeral 1). It is prone to long-distance propagation, like the previously mentioned bands, and also I have enjoyed that "TV-DXing." Within the TV VHF I band there is the six-meter ham band. In many European countries it is forbidden to work there because of the potential interference to television. In Finland the band is very narrow, 50 to 50.5 MHz with CW (Morse code) and SSB. Mobile stations and FM mode are unlawful.

68 to 87.5 MHz is a land mobile band and users include businesses, security companies, taxicabs, power companies, etc. Around 68 MHz you can find "hobby users" such as hunters, volunteer search and rescue organizations, scouts, the Finnish Red Cross and volunteer motorist or roadside assistance services. All this traffic is simplex. 78 to 81 MHz is for taxicabs and 83 to 87 MHz is used by power companies. In Sweden, 78 to 80 MHz is a police radio band. If two-frequency channels are in use, the input is usually five MHz lower. Channel spacing is 25 KHz, in neighboring Sweden it is 12.5 KHz.

A major problem with the 68 to 87.5 MHz band is caused by the Russian and Estonian FM broadcast stations between 66 and 73 MHz. They reduce the availability of

frequencies on our land mobile band especially close to our eastern border and southern shoreline.

Even if a frequency is good for two-way communications most of the time, skip or propagation conditions may bring an FM station close to the operating frequency yielding unbearable interference. Furthermore, there are two East European TV channel allocations on the band and another two on our 87.5 to 108 MHz FM broadcast band! These factors give us a good reason for careful frequency coordination and planning.

108 to 137 MHz is for aviation and 137 to 138 MHz is for weather satellites. 138 to 144 is allocated to the authorities and related aviation activities and 144 to 146 MHz is the two-meter ham band for all of Europe. The most monitored band in Finland is 146 to 174 MHz. It accommodates some taxi companies, our oldest car phone system (146.9 to 149.9 MHz), several businesses and security companies, the international VHF marine band, fire departments, civil defense, police departments, etc.

In Finland the Ministry for Internal Affairs maintains and controls both the police and fire departments. The police in Finland have one radio system and all portable and mobile radios cover all of the seven simplex and 19 repeater channels. The channels have been assigned so users on a particular channel will not interfere with each other. Simplex operations and inputs are around 165 MHz and outputs are on 170 MHz.

The capitol of Finland is Helsinki and all three police departments operating in the greater Helsinki area are now using radios manufactured by Motorola! Most unfortunate is that the voice transmissions are digitally protected -- only simplex traffic is still in the clear. Two thumbs down! The rest of the country is still in the clear using radio equipment made in Finland.

Fire departments nationwide are assigned to 158 to 160 MHz (base) and 163 to 165 MHz (mobiles and simplex). There are plans to allocate a new public safety band around 380 MHz for digital and possibly trunked radio communication. The band would be reserved for that purpose in the whole European continent but with the current economic situation those alarming plans are still far away, fortunately!

Above 174 MHz we find much of the same as can be found in the United States. 174 to 230 MHz is the TV VHF III band, channels 5 to 12. Above that are all sorts of things: surveillance, remote control, telemetry, data transfer links and wireless microphones. The military is also active there; with a sensitive receiver and an active antenna you can hear military satellites.

Trunked systems are newcomers into the land mobile bands and 406 to 428 MHz is a fresh allocation for those services in most countries of Europe, including Finland. Trunked systems will definitely form a chal-

lenge to the serious monitor! The 70-centimeter amateur band is on 430 to 440 MHz and is occasionally plagued by the Russian "Syledis" positioning system, especially during the late summer months when tropospheric ducting from the east, along the coastline, occurs.

The next interesting sub-band on UHF is the Nordic Mobile Telephone (NMT) system which was the world's first sophisticated cellular phone system to cover a wide area: the Scandinavian countries -- Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. The NMT system has recently "invaded" Estonia and parts of the Russian Federation. Roaming from one country to another is easy: You just select the right country on the phone. The "NMT-450" operates on 463 to 467.5 MHz using 25 KHz steps (mobiles transmit 10 MHz lower).

The UHF-TV band is allocated to 470 to 790 MHz, channels 21 to 60. Above that we have different users like the two short-range cordless cityphone systems, CT1 and CT2. The new European digital CB band is allocated to 933 to 935 MHz with 80 channels and the input frequencies are 45 MHz lower. The service will mostly rely on repeaters and virtually anyone can put up a repeater. The cost of equipment for this digital short-range radio (DSRR) band still remains to be seen.

Like the previously mentioned NMT-450, the "NMT-900" is active with users too. The system was built using the experience gained on the NMT-450 and the coverage is almost the same. The allocation is 935 to 945 MHz with 12.5 KHz channel spacing (mobiles transmit 45 MHz lower).

The latest land-based cellular system is the Pan-European Global System of Mobile Communication (GSM), which is fully digitalized with many innovative features such as the personal user card which enables users to use any GSM phone anywhere in Europe where the system is operational. The frequencies are 945 to 959 MHz with 200 KHz channel spacing (mobiles are 45 MHz lower). In each country there are two rival companies maintaining a "network" for the sake of competition. The GSM is the first non-monitor-friendly system. Beware of these systems!

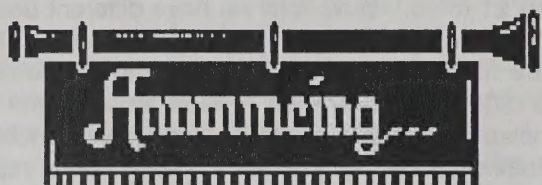
What about the monitoring hardware available in Finland? Several brands and makes are on sale in Finland and all receivers must be type-approved. Prices are about 40 percent higher than in the United States which doesn't make it a too-affordable hobby. The most popular tabletop radio is probably the AOR AR2002 with good specifications except for the speed and memory capacity. The number one handheld scanner is without doubt the Bearcat 200XLT. The European version of the 200 comes with the VHF mid-band, 68 to 88 MHz, instead of the American VHF low-band, 29 to 54 MHz.

Icom's IC-R1F is also popular together with the Yupiteru line of receivers. Some enthusiasts' shacks also boast the IC-R7000. Other brands on the market are Shinwa, Kenwood, Yaesu, Fairmate (AOR), old Regency, Revco, Swedish brands (Handic and DLS). Antennas for home

monitoring are most commonly the discone type with some yagi-type antennas to pick-up distant signals. Many amateur radio operators use their VHF/UHF rigs for monitoring if the equipment has the extended coverage with sufficient sensitivity.

The only publication for scanner enthusiasts in Finland is a magazine called "Skanneri Radio" and I'm proud to be a contributor to this publication with stories about the scanning scene in America -- the latest being a story about Alan Henney and his hobby! So there you have it. Monitoring in Finland in a (large) nutshell! I wish to keep in touch with the Capitol Hill Monitors in the future and wish you all the best.

* * *



BITS AND PIECES

A JOINT FIRE/POLICE 9-1-1 CENTER FOR DC?

The District's on-again/off-again joint fire-police 9-1-1 communications center is on again! The District is one of the few area jurisdictions which doesn't already have police and fire communications facilities combined at a single location. For about the past year the fire department has been constructing a new communications facility next to the existing building on McMillan Drive, NW. After much debate, the new structure will reportedly be renovated to allow room for both the police and fire communications divisions.

Communications facilities for the Office of Emergency Preparedness/Mayor's Command Center will also be included. The District government anticipates implementing a trunked radio system with the move to the new facility, which is at least a year away (check the January newsletter for the proposed trunked system frequencies). Thanks to Gene Lichtman and Dave Statter for bringing this update to our attention.

PG POLICE PLAN CHANGES

Because parts for General Electric's MPS radio are getting scarce, PGPD-specialist Larry Vespermann says, Prince George's County plans to purchase 16-channel General Electric portable radios in coming months for both police and sheriff officers. Larry says this and other proposed changes (which include two new repeater channels, expansion of the Adam sector, and separate dispatch channels for the Adam and Baker sectors and George and Henry sectors) will likely take place July 1 if

the proposals are adopted. The new GE radios will include a scan option, which will be essential if the the Adam and Baker sectors and George and Henry sectors switch to separate dispatch channels. Refer to the February newsletter for more details and frequencies.

CHARLES COUNTY FIRE UPDATE

Ever since Charles County fire moved to the VHF high band, the department has said it would eventually employ a repeater system. Now that a radio advisory committee has completed its study, Charlie Bowman says, the new repeater system and several other radio-related changes may become reality.

Since Charles County fire's primary channel, 158.775, is a popular local government allocation (also used by Loudoun County), Charles County may make 158.775 an input to the proposed repeater. 159.075 and 159.42, at one point, were being considered as pairs for channels 1 and 2 (158.775 and 155.085). Fire channels 3 and 4 (158.865 and 158.955) are of limited use since they are mobile-only allocations shared with the MNCP&PC and University of Maryland-College Park. Estimates for the required fire radio equipment, Charlie adds, could cost between \$4 and \$5 million.

OCEAN CITY'S NEW EOC

While the District's new 9-1-1 communications center is still in the planning process, Ocean City's new facility on 65th Street has just about reached completion. In fact, if construction goes as planned, the facility will be fully operational sometime this month. If you're in town make certain to inquire about a possible open house. On Monday March 21 at 7:45 a.m., Ocean City police switch all radio communication to the city's trunked radio system (refer to the March 1993 newsletter for frequencies). Fire and EMS units have also switched to the system, but simulcast primary operations on the former dispatch channel, 46.36 MHz.

Ocean City, unlike most local governments, installed a General Electric trunked system which transmits a series of tones at the end of many radio transmissions and sometimes at random. The purpose of the tones is to frustrate scanner listeners by holding the scanner on a channel for several seconds after a transmission has ended.

In response, Comsec Associates has introduced a \$30 trunking-tone eliminator which does an excellent job forcing the scanner to resume scanning when it senses these tones. Unfortunately, however, the process takes a fifth of a second. So, scanner listeners who only scan the trunked system may still be irritated by the short but repetitive buzz each time the scanner encounters the tones. For information on the trunking-tone eliminator call Comsec at 818-502-0000.

DELAWARE'S DIGITAL TRUNKED SYSTEM UPDATE

As first mentioned in the September newsletter, the State of Delaware is implementing a digital Motorola trunked radio system which will include all state and most municipal police, fire and EMS agencies. The proposed system with 36 NPSPAC channels (see the January issue for frequencies) will be sub-divided into three geographic regions which correspond to Delaware's three counties; with 16 channels in New Castle County and 10 channels each in Kent and Sussex counties. A digital microwave network (6 and 10 GHz are under consideration) will link the three county sub-systems and the intra-county system sites.

The state hopes the 10 proposed trunked system antenna sites will provide a 95 percent reliable contour coverage for three-watt portable radios operating at street level. Site selection was chosen to provide a predicted 90 percent reliability coverage in buildings within selected populated areas such as the cities of Wilmington, Newark, Dover, Georgetown, Seaford and Rehoboth Beach. The system, when implemented, will hopefully provide reliable radio communications anywhere within Delaware for more than 4,000 users, in a truly multi-jurisdictional radio system.

The system will first be operational in New Castle County, where antenna site construction is expected to commence this November. The first users are expected to be on-line by June of next year. Users in Kent and Sussex counties will not be on-line until September, 1996 and October, 1997, respectively. The cost of the entire project, including new radios purchased by fire departments, is more than \$35.8 million.

BEARCAT 2500/8500 UPDATES

A recent issue of Monitoring Times mentioned the various complaints which plague the new Bearcat 2500XLT and 8500XLT scanners. According to the article, complaints include poor sensitivity and severe strong-signal over-load on both radios as well as short battery life on the 2500. Uniden told MT that some complaints have been addressed and corrected in current production models. Several dealers have exchanged their stock for the factory-enhanced replacements. Owners of either radio may contact Uniden to arrange for free modifications. Before Uniden found a correction for the battery problem, 2500 owners were given a free second battery. Contact the Uniden customer service center (1-800-297-1023) if you have any questions.

Charlie Bowman, who purchased a 2500 from Communications Electronics when the radio was first

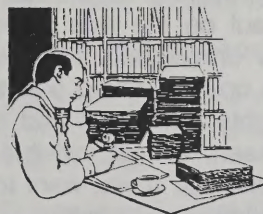
available, says he has had nothing but trouble with the scanner. Charlie sent the radio back to Uniden five times for repair. Besides the short battery life, the signal over-load was a major problem.

While Uniden was helpful with moving "birdies" and other minor complaints, Charlie says the 2500 continued to experience heavy over-load, especially in the 150 MHz band. Charlie told Uniden he would continue to send the radio back until the problems were corrected. A Uniden customer service representative told him Uniden was having difficulty perfecting the triple-conversion circuitry.

The fifth time Charlie returned the radio, Uniden offered to send him both a Bearcat 200XLT and 800XLT in exchange, which would be specially tuned to his preferences. Since Uniden said it couldn't refund his money, Charlie accepted the offer.

In February, John Scott says he purchased a Bearcat 8500. Besides the extra channels and frequencies, John notes that the radio is a "good bit better than the BC890XLT. It doesn't have as much intermod and other nuisance noises like the BC890... So far, it seems to be a pretty good radio." Hopefully John's experience indicates that Uniden has made significant improvements to 8500 and perhaps to the 2500 as well. John has for sale his BC890XLT which includes the CTCSS tone board for \$200 or best offer. If you're interested, contact Alan (301-270-2531) and we'll put you in touch with John.

* * *



NEWSSCAN

by Brent Baker

MPD RECEIVES MORE FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.

Eighteen federal agencies have agreed to supply more patrol officers, vehicles and money to help the District combat violent crime. In a March Washington Post article, US Attorney Eric H. Holder Jr. said the resources the agencies are now committing is in some ways unprecedented. The announcement was the result of talks between local and federal law enforcement officials that began in October, after Clinton rejected the mayor's request for National Guard assistance but pledged other federal help. Some elements of the plan are slight modifications to the joint crime work which federal and local officials have been doing for years.

As part of the plan, Rene Sanchez reported, 50 US Park Police officers are already supplementing the city's police patrols in several Northeast Washington neighborhoods, primarily within the 5th District. Since US Park Police officers began supplementing patrols, they have made 215 arrests and seized 21 guns. Federal agencies also are giving the DC police 115 vehicles and nearly \$2 million in cash from their asset forfeiture accounts.

US Park Police officers detailed to MPD identify as "Park Cruisers" in the 900 series on MPD channels (primarily the 5th District's channel, 460.2). Park Police officers detailed to MPD appear to communicate amongst themselves on the old UHF Department of Interior frequencies, namely 411.625 and 411.725.

MPD'S VIOLENT CRIME RESPONSE TEAM'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED. The \$80,000 Ford truck made a big splash when it hit the streets four months ago, wrote Washington Post reporter Brian Mooar. But now some officers assigned to investigate non-fatal shootings and gang activity say the truck, known on MPD channels as Cruiser 340, may have made too big of a splash. Now that Police Chief Fred Thomas has decided to disband the task force, the truck's future appears uncertain.

"While crowds once pressed close to catch a glimpse of the behemoth on crime scenes -- allowing investigators to surreptitiously photograph potential suspects and witnesses -- people now scatter," observed the Post. "Its most effective weapons and secrets have become common knowledge on the streets."

The truck, paid for by the Justice Department, was hardly designed to be a tool of stealth, and officers said they believe that may be its single biggest drawback. The word "police" appears 21 times on the outside of the truck, which also is adorned with 10 golden police badges. The names of Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly and Thomas appear three times each on the back and sides.

Several officers told the Post the truck was too visible noting that they actually needed something in a "plain wrapper, something that said U-haul on the side... For that truck to work, it needs to be unmarked," another officer said. "You don't want to be on a shooting scene and see this truck with flashing lights and signs and a video camera. It needs to be unseen, almost invisible. That's the biggest intimidation factor of all. If you want to capture these guys doing the shootings, you have to be inconspicuous."

The truck, the brainchild of Inspector Wyndell C. Watkins, is equipped with cellular telephones, a computer and a fax machine, and has a bank of powerful floodlights to illuminate wide areas at night. A video camera mounted in a turret atop the truck was designed to pan and record the scene outside the vehicle. With the touch of a button, scenes from the video camera can be transformed into photographs.

According to the Post, DC police declined to make any officials available for interviews regarding the truck's fate. "'Apparently the chief hasn't made any kind of official announcement about... what to do with the van or what to do with the unit,' said Officer Anthony O'Leary, of the DC police public information office. 'Until the chief figures out what he wants to do with that unit, where everybody's going to go... [and] where they're going to use the resources that were allocated for that unit, we're not going to discuss anything about it.'"

MORE MPD OFFICERS PATROL DC SCHOOLS. Sixty more DC police officers began duty in and around the city's public schools last month in a shuffling of assignments that drew officers from one of MPD's highly touted special units as well as local police districts, the Washington Post reported. The new assignments, made in response to the shooting of a student inside Eastern High School in March, take 32 officers from MPD's Violent Crime Response Team and four from each of the seven police districts, police officials told the Post. They join 34 officers already assigned to patrol near the city's schools.

Officers were sent to eight high schools, one middle school and five elementary schools which were selected because of recent criminal activity, the Post said. According to the front-page article, "Both patrol officers and department officials were critical of the new deployments, saying Police Chief Fred Thomas has diluted the effectiveness of the five special units he has formed in the last year by constantly shifting officers. Some members of the response team, for instance, said they have been transferred three times since October, movements that a police union official called a 'shell game.'"

Since being named police chief in December 1992, the Post observed, Thomas has created a Violent Crime Response Team to investigate non-fatal shootings, announced a special detail to protect businesses in high-crime areas, detailed 20 investigators to a new warrant squad, launched a gun interdiction unit, created a community relations division, announced the doubling of the number of detectives in the homicide division to more than 100 and added staff to training and recruiting.

Thomas has also extended MPD's participation in "several local-federal task forces created under his predecessor, Isaac Fulwood Jr., including two drug units, a carjacking unit, a gang unit and a unit charged with investigating old homicide cases."

Although special crime programs have multiplied, the number of officers has not. During Thomas's tenure, the Post reported, MPD has shrunk from 4,425 officers to 4,128 officers as of early this month because of resignations, retirements and firings. The department is authorized to have 4,500 officers and Thomas has vowed to reach that number by the end of the year.

Some VCRT officers reportedly told the Post they were angry they would be "posted in school hallways as 'kiddie cops.' Morale is at an all-time low, and [members of the VCRT] are just fed up," said a VCRT official. MPD officers detailed to the DC schools identify as "P" units on school security channels 1 and 2, 155.04 and 153.935, while school security guards use "SC" designations. In addition, some DC school staff communicate on 151.715, a popular business frequency.

ARMY TO CLOSE VINT HILL FARMS. "It was supposed to be his lunch break, but Leonard Mudloff was at his desk at Vint Hill Farms Station, copying an intercepted radio message," reads the lead of a Washington Post article.

"Only much later would he learn what the coded transmission contained: the locations of German fortifications on the Normandy coast. The number of divisions assembled to protect Nazi-occupied France. The number of Tiger and Panther tanks in reserve. Even the names of all the German commanders. That was 1943, and the information captured in that barn-turned-spy-base in the Virginia countryside proved key to the Allies' D-Day invasion."

"Half a century later," Post reporter Peter Baker wrote, "there is no more Nazi army, and the communists have been toppled from the world stage. Soon the Vint Hill base will join them in the history books, yet another casualty of the New World Order and this country's shrinking military." About 2,650 employees at Vint Hill, "Washington's giant ear," will either be moved to another state or will lose their jobs by 1998 when the base closes.

The Army purchased the Vint Hill dairy farm, 35 miles southwest of Washington, in 1942 for \$127,500, according to the Post. "At first, the 2nd Signal Service Battalion's listening operation consisted of a wire antenna strung out the window of an old manor house. After the manure was swept out of the barn, the unit set up shop on the second floor, with rows of young men stationed at small desks, earphones clamped on their heads and Teletypes at their fingers for transcription."

Through 51 years of wars, both hot and cold, Baker wrote, the 700-acre base played a "critical role -- first as a super-secret listening post that eavesdropped on friend and foe alike, and later as a center for development of highly sophisticated equipment designed to intercept or jam enemy transmissions. For decades, according to the 1982 book 'The Puzzle Palace,' Vint Hill trained its many antennas on Washington's Embassy Row, keeping tabs on international radio traffic. That included even the British."

One government official told the Post that before the base-closure commission could decide the fate for Vint Hill, the chairman had to have a top-secret briefing, and other members of the commission weren't eligible. "There's one function out there that you can't even breathe about that goes on, and they didn't know. Nobody on the base-closing commission knew about it."

Please address all correspondence to Alan. We encourage readers to submit material and to write articles which relate to the hobby. All submissions are subject to editing for both style and content. When submitting material please make certain we have your phone number should we have any questions. We welcome frequency and visitor requests, but please include a SASE.

Alan Henney
6912 Prince George's Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912-5414
301-270-2531 (voice) / 301-270-5774 (fax)

Newsletter Staff:

Alan Henney, General Editor and Acting Treasurer
Bill Hardman, Executive Editor
Mike Peyton and Dave Clark, Distribution
Brent Baker, NewsScan Editor
Ken Fowler, Amateur Radio Net Coordinator

The Capitol Hill Monitor is the non-profit monthly newsletter of the Capitol Hill Monitors. The newsletter keeps scanner enthusiasts abreast of local meetings, frequency profiles and other topics of interest. Dues (which includes 12 issues) are \$8. Kindly make checks payable to Alan Henney.

Meeting Coordinators:

Mike Peyton, Maryland Coordinator (703-902-6241)
Ken Fowler, Virginia Coordinator (703-385-2165)

Capitol Hill Monitor's Scanner/Shortwave Net:

Listen for the CHM net, hosted by Ken Fowler, at 7:30 p.m. on the first and third Monday of each month on 146.91 MHz.

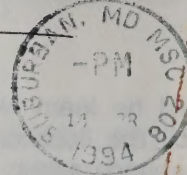
Frequency Forum Computer Bulletin Board:

We encourage computer users to log onto Jack Anderson's Frequency Forum computer BBS at 703-207-9622 (8-N-1). Frequency Forum is the official electronic gathering place for readers of the Capitol Hill Monitor.

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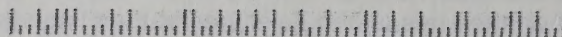
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6912 PRINCE GEORGES AVE
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*** IMPORTANT NOTE ***

Several members reported receiving a damaged March newsletter. Please notify Alan if you require a replacement copy of that or any other newsletter.